

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-130 without prejudice or disclaimer, and add new claims 131-139 as follows:

Claims 1-130 (canceled)

Claim 131 (new): A portable basketball system for use in playing basketball-related games on sand covered outdoor environments, comprising:

- a wind-transmissive backboard structure having a backboard surface disposed substantially within a first plane, bounded by a frame structure, and characterized by a high degree of air permeability across said backboard surface so that air currents, expected in said sand covered outdoor environments, can pass through said backboard surface with minimal resistance yet deflect a lightweight basketball when tossed thereagainst during basketball-related games;

- wherein said wind-transmissive backboard structure includes a mesh material stretched tightly about and fastened to said frame structure so as to form a planar backboard surface which presents minimal resistance to expected air currents present on the beach or along a shoreline, and undergoes minimal surface distortion when said lightweight basketball is bounced off the backboard surface during said basket-ball related games;

- a basketball hoop structure defining an opening through which a basketball can be passed during said basketball-related games, and generally disposed within a second plane substantially perpendicular to said first plane;

- a pole assembly, including a plurality of arrangeable pole sections, for supporting said wind-transmissive backboard structure at a height above the surface of a sand bed located in said sand covered outdoor environments; and

- a pole anchoring device for driving beneath said sand bed and supporting said pole assembly in a substantially plumb orientation, while playing said basketball-related games.

Claim 132 (new): The portable basketball system of claim 131, further comprising:

- a pole anchoring device which further includes a set of sand-engaging threads formed on the external surface of said pole anchoring sleeve, and

a set of handle structures provided on said pole anchoring sleeve, enabling a user to rotate said pole anchoring device while pushing said pole anchoring device into said sand bed, thereby screwing said pole anchoring sleeve beneath said sand bed.

Claim 133 (new): The portable basketball system of claim 131,

wherein said basketball hoop structure is hingedly connected to said frame structure; and wherein during said transport configuration,

the second plane of said basketball hoop structure is orientable substantially parallel to the first said backboard surface,

said pole sections of said pole assembly are contained within a pole enclosing tube; and

whereby said portable basketball system is arranged for transport between said sand covered outdoor environment and said remote location.

Claim 134 (new): A portable basketball system for use in playing basketball-related games on sand covered outdoor environments, comprising:

a wind-transmissive backboard structure having a backboard surface disposed substantially within a first plane, bounded by a frame structure, and characterized by a high degree of air permeability across said backboard surface so that air currents, expected in said sand covered outdoor environments, can pass through said backboard surface with minimal resistance yet deflect a lightweight basketball when tossed thereagainst during basketball-related games;

wherein said wind-transmissive backboard structure includes a mesh material stretched tightly about and fastened to said frame structure so as to form a planar backboard surface which presents minimal resistance to expected air currents present on the beach or along a shoreline, and undergoes minimal surface distortion when said lightweight basketball is bounced off the backboard surface during said basket-ball related games;

a basketball hoop structure defining an opening through which a basketball can be passed during said basketball-related games, and generally disposed within a second plane substantially perpendicular to said first plane;

a pole assembly, including a plurality of telescopically-connected tubes which are intercoupled using telescopic linking mechanisms, for supporting said wind-transmissive backboard structure at a height above the surface of a sand bed located in said sand covered outdoor environments; and

a pole anchoring device for driving beneath said sand bed and supporting said pole assembly in a substantially plumb orientation, while playing said basketball-related games.

Claim 135 (new): The portable basketball system of claim 134, wherein said pole anchoring device further includes a set of sand-engaging threads formed on the external surface of said pole anchoring sleeve, and a set of handle structures is provided on said pole anchoring sleeve, to enable a user to rotate said pole anchoring device while pushing said pole anchoring device into said sand bed, thereby screwing said pole anchoring sleeve beneath said sand bed.

Claim 136 (new): The portable basketball system of claim 134, wherein said basketball hoop structure is hingedly connected to said frame structure.

Claim 137 (new): A portable basketball system for use in playing basketball-related games on sand covered outdoor environments, comprising:

a wind-transmissive backboard structure having a backboard surface disposed substantially within a first plane, bounded by a frame structure, and characterized by a high degree of air permeability across said backboard surface so that air currents, expected in said sand covered outdoor environments, can pass through said backboard surface with minimal resistance yet deflect a lightweight basketball when tossed thereagainst during basketball-related games;

wherein said wind-transmissive backboard structure includes a mesh material stretched tightly about and fastened to said frame structure so as to form a planar backboard surface which presents minimal resistance to expected air currents present on the beach or along a shoreline, and undergoes minimal surface distortion when said lightweight basketball is bounced off the backboard surface during said basket-ball related games;

a basketball hoop structure defining an opening through which a basketball can be passed during said basketball-related games, and generally disposed within a second plane substantially perpendicular to said first plane; and

a pole assembly for supporting said wind-transmissive backboard structure at a height above the surface of a sand bed located in said sand covered outdoor environments;

a pole anchoring device for driving beneath said sand bed and supporting said pole assembly in a substantially plumb orientation, while playing said basketball-related games;

wherein said pole anchoring device comprises:

a pole anchoring sleeve having a hollow inner volume for receipt of sand and a portion of said pole assembly;

a plurality of perforations formed through said pole anchoring sleeve, permitting the passage of grains of said sand into said hollow inner volume when said pole anchoring sleeve is driven beneath said sand bed; and

a set of sand-engaging threads formed on the external surface of said pole anchoring sleeve.

Claim 138 (new): The portable basketball system of claim 137, wherein a set of handle structures is provided on said pole anchoring sleeve, to enable a user to rotate said pole anchoring device while pushing said pole anchoring device into said sand bed, thereby screwing said pole anchoring sleeve beneath said sand bed.

Claim 139 (new): The portable basketball system of claim 137, wherein said pole assembly further comprises a pole anchoring pin formed on an innermost telescopically-connected pole section, and said pole anchoring sleeve having an aperture for receiving said pole anchoring pin when the innermost telescopically-connected pole section is inserted within said hollow inner volume of said pole anchoring sleeve, thereby locking said pole assembly to said pole anchoring device.